

NCHSR

PROGRAM SOLICITATION

**Grants
for Health Services
Dissertation Research
1987**

DEPOSITORY

MAR 31 1987

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Public Health Service
National Center for Health Services Research
and Health Care Technology Assessment

Notice:

- Application submissions for 1987 awards must be received on or before Tuesday, November 4, 1986. Funding decisions will be made and announced about four months after the submission deadline.
- During the last quarter of 1986 a second deadline for 1987 awards may be announced, depending upon the availability of funds. Information may be obtained from the address below.
- Submissions must conform to the instructions of the dissertation research grant application and this solicitation.
- Applicants must submit the original and 6 copies of the application. A complete application consists of the application form, PHS-398, and a detailed narrative project description.
- Submit this material directly to NCHSR at the address below. An application sent to any other address is likely to encounter a delay substantial enough to preclude its review.
- Applications must be sent to:

Chief, Review and Advisory Services (Dissertations)
National Center for Health Services Research
and Health Care Technology Assessment
5600 Fishers Lane, Room 18A-20
Rockville, MD 20857; 301/443-3091

July 1986

Introduction

In keeping with its efforts to stimulate innovative and timely research on significant issues associated with the delivery of health services, the National Center for Health Services Research and Health Care Technology Assessment (NCHSR) announces that grant support will be available in 1987 for research to be undertaken in conjunction with the preparation of a doctoral dissertation.

This support is designed to encourage individuals from a variety of academic disciplines and programs to study complex health services delivery problems, and to aid the career development of new health services researchers.

Grants to support dissertation research will not provide more than \$20,000 in total direct costs. Dissertation research grants will be administered in accordance with the provisions of Title 42, Chapter 1, Part 67, Subpart A, of the Code of Federal Regulations.

Awards will depend upon the availability of funding. NCHSR expects to fund about 15 dissertation research projects in 1987.

Eligibility

Students are eligible to apply for dissertation research grants if they are enrolled in an accredited doctoral degree program in the social, management, medical, or health sciences, and intend to conduct or are conducting dissertation research on the organization, delivery, financing, or quality of health care services. All requirements for the doctoral degree other than the dissertation must be completed by the time of the grant award (see "Letter of approval," under Application requirements).

The proposed principal investigator must be the doctoral student, who may be either a registered resident or nonresident student.

The applicant may be either the institution which is to administer the grant on behalf of the proposed principal investigator, or the proposed principal investigator applying as an individual applicant. When the student decides to have an institution administer the grant, the student must apply through the institution. The institutional applicant may be either the degree-granting institution or a nonprofit institution with which the proposed principal investigator is professionally affiliated. In determining which type of institutional applicant is more appropriate, the student needs to consider the extent to which the resources of the designated institution are capable of supporting the research effort proposed. Whenever feasible, the proposed principal investigator is encouraged to submit an application which will be administered through an institution.

A proposed principal investigator for dissertation research grant support need not be a citizen of the United States. However, investigators who are not citizens and do not have a permanent resident visa must apply through an institution.

Applications from students enrolled in foreign institutions will be accepted provided that the applications are in the English language and the investigators apply through their institutions. If an applicant from a foreign institution is selected for an award, all reports required as a condition of the award (the grantee's dissertation and financial status reports) must be submitted in the English language.

Scope of awards

Applications for research grants prepared in response to this announcement shall contain a budget that does not exceed \$20,000 in total direct costs for the entire project period. A proposal that requests support in excess of \$20,000 in total direct costs will not be accepted in response to this announcement and will be returned.

Applications should request the amount of time necessary to complete the dissertation. The dissertation research grant usually is awarded for a period of 12 months or less, except that an investigator whose dissertation will require more than a year may receive a grant for a 17-month period. Investigators who require 18 or more months to complete the research project must submit a continuation application for support beyond the first 12 months. The continuation application must be submitted before the end of the first year. Continuation support can be awarded provided that the total direct costs of the entire project do not exceed \$20,000 and satisfactory progress is made.

An investigator who receives support for dissertation research under a grant from NCHSR may not at the same time receive support under a predoctoral or fellowship grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Allowable costs

Research expenses usually covered by Public Health Service grants for research support will be covered by dissertation research grants. Allowable costs include the investigator's salary; direct project expenses, such as travel, data processing and supplies; and, in the case of grants to organizations or institutions, indirect costs.

For the purpose of calculating indirect costs, dissertation research grants are considered to be training grants. Therefore, in accordance with PHS policy, indirect costs are limited to 8 percent of total direct costs.

The salary of the investigator usually will not exceed the maximum allowable stipend for predoctoral students supported by National Research Service Awards of the Public Health Service. During fiscal year 1986 this was \$6,552 on an annualized full-time basis. Any higher salary or any level of effort that is less than full time should be specifically justified.

Application requirements

(1) **Application form.** Health services dissertation research grant application materials and detailed instructions are available from the address on page 2.

(2) **Closing date.** The closing date for receipt of applications is Tuesday, November 4, 1986.

(3) **Copies required.** Applicants must submit the original and 6 copies of the complete application form PHS-398, including a narrative project description. The application must be prepared in conformity with the dissertation research grant application instructions and this solicitation. Application materials must be sent directly to NCHSR and only to NCHSR at the address shown on page 2. Refer to the instructions of the form concerning preparation of materials for submission.

(4) **Letter of approval.** A letter from the faculty committee or university official directly responsible for supervising the development and progress of the dissertation research must be submitted with the application. The letter must state (a) that the project proposal has been approved by the dissertation committee, (b) that all requirements for the doctoral degree, except the dissertation, will have been completed by the time of the grant award, and (c) that the university official or faculty committee expects the doctoral candidate to proceed with the approved project proposal with or without NCHSR support.

(5) **Conformity.** A proposal in response to this announcement will not be accepted unless written in general conformity with these instructions. The information in the required narrative project description must be presented in a scientific and technical manner appropriate for review according to this solicitation and the dissertation research grant application instructions.

(6) **Resubmission.** Applicants should not revise rejected applications and resubmit them before consulting the Chief, Review and Advisory Services. Resubmissions are seldom funded.

Application review process

Dissertation research grant applications will be reviewed by non-Federal experts, assisted as necessary by senior NCHSR staff members or other experts in the Federal service. Reviewers will be selected on the basis of their health services research accomplishments and knowledge, and their experience in research career development. Because reviews will be rigorous, a high level of specificity is important in the application.

Only applications which propose studies in the areas identified in Section 305 of the Public Health Service Act are eligible for support. Section 305 authorizes research activities respecting:

- Accessibility, acceptability, planning, organization, distribution, technology, utilization, quality and financing of health services and systems
- Supply and distribution, education and training, quality, utilization, organization, and costs of health manpower
- Design, utilization, organization, and costs of facilities and equipment
- Role of market forces in the health care system and their part in restraining cost increases and improving the availability and quality of care
- Safety, efficacy, effectiveness, cost effectiveness, economic, and social impacts of health care technologies.

All elements of the application will be considered in the review process. Primary emphasis will be given to the scientific merit and feasibility of the project and its relevance in terms of NCHSR research priorities. These priorities are: (1) primary care/health promotion and disease prevention, (2) technology assessment, (3) the role of market forces in health care delivery, and (4) studies relevant to the unique operational and policy issues faced by State and local governments. Specific review criteria include:

Problem significance

- The project is focused primarily on a significant problem in the delivery of health care.
- The anticipated methodology or results of the project have national interest, provide a basis for generalized conclusions, or have practical applicability.

Research design

- The problem to be addressed by the research is clearly defined.
- The proposal reflects an adequate knowledge of other research related to the problem.
- Questions to be answered or hypotheses to be tested are well formulated and clearly stated.

- The proposal (1) fully describes the methodological procedure to be followed; (2) where applicable, discusses sampling procedures, the size of the population to be studied and the size of the sample and control groups; and (3) describes the types and sources of data to be gathered, methodological problems expected to be encountered, and specific analyses to be made.
- The proposal adequately describes the plans for managing the project, including a tentative schedule for the main steps of the investigation within the project period requested.

Personnel and facilities

- The experience and training of the applicant appear adequate to carry out the research.
- The facilities and organizational arrangements available are adequate to carry out the research.
- Faculty advice and support are available and appropriate to the research and analysis proposed.

Appropriateness of the budget

- The suggested approach to the problem is reasonable in terms of overall cost as compared with the cost of other possible approaches.
- The suggested approach to problems involving the analysis of statistical data utilizes, to the extent feasible, data already available or being collected through government and other sources.

Reviewers may recommend that an application be approved, disapproved, or approved with specific modifications. In addition, reviewers give their individual views of the significance of each project. The Director, Division of Extramural Research, will make final funding decisions based on the recommendations of the reviewers, the relevance of the project to program priorities, and the availability of appropriated funds. Funding of a project may be made conditional on acceptance of recommended changes, including budgetary and substantive changes in the project.

Review of projects for continuation support

Applicants who have received approval for projects requiring 18 or more months of effort must submit a continuation application with a progress report two months prior to the end of the first year of support. Decisions concerning support beyond 12 months are based on the availability of appropriated funds and on the evidence contained in the report that the investigator has made acceptable progress in conducting the approved research.

Grant conditions

Applications approved for funding may be activated for work to begin approximately one month after the notification of award. Work on the project must be initiated within nine months following the date of award.

A grantee who discontinues a project during the grant period must inform NCHSR immediately in writing. The grant for a discontinued project may be suspended or terminated.

The dissertation will constitute the final report of the grant. Three copies of the dissertation are required to be submitted. The dissertation must be officially accepted by the faculty committee or university official responsible for the candidate's dissertation and must be signed by the responsible officials.

Grantees enrolled in a foreign institution must submit copies of the dissertation and all financial status reports in the English language.

Information concerning other conditions applicable to a dissertation research grant is contained in the regulations under Title 42, Chapter 1, Part 67, Subpart A, of the Code of Federal Regulations. A copy of these regulations and the dissertation research grant application instructions will be included among the application materials sent to each applicant.

**U.S. Department of Health
and Human Services**
Public Health Service
National Center for Health Services Research
and Health Care Technology Assessment
1-46 Park Building
Rockville, MD 20857

